

This was an exciting year for ocean research. Monterey hosted the Ocean Science Summit in June, marking the 10th anniversary of the Year of the Ocean and the White House Conference on Oceans. The summit hosted state and federal policymakers and scientists who share a concern about our oceans and the lack of attention the federal government has directed toward them.

The bill I introduced last year, Oceans-21 ([H.R. 21](#)), also saw some important moves this year. It went before the House Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans, where it passed by a vote of 11 to 3. We are hoping the full Natural Resources Committee will vote on the bill soon, which is a prelude to a vote by the full House. Regardless of what happens to the bill this year, momentum will carry over into the next Congress. Ocean protection and conservation is finally getting the attention we all know it deserves.

I introduced two additional ocean bills this year, one to protect the Southern sea otter, the other to control the amounts of pollution that cruise ships can emit. The Southern Sea Otter Recovery and Research Act ([H.R. 3639](#)) is moving through the committee process that must happen before a bill is heard on the House floor. The legislation has already received a hearing before a panel of experts, including several from the Central Coast. Jim Curland from Defenders of Wildlife, Prof. Jim Estes from UC Santa Cruz and Andrew Johnson from the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Sea Otter Research and Conservation program all traveled to Washington to testify.

In early July I introduced the Clean Cruise Ship Act ([H.R. 6434](#)). This legislation will create coastal zones where cruise ships are prohibited from dumping waste, strengthen waste treatment standards and increase surveillance to ensure compliance. Many of us remember the awful mess that a cruise ship caused when it dumped thousands of gallons of waste five years ago. It's past time that we hold the cruise ship industry accountable for mistakes like that. They must be partners in this process, and this bill will ensure that relationship is developed.

The House and Senate both passed the Maritime Pollution Prevention Act ([H.R. 802](#)) and it is now law. However, many other bills have been delayed by the Senate, a fate that has met many pieces of legislation approved by the House. Here are some of the bills passed by the House but not taken up by the Senate:

- Beach Protection Act of 2008 ([H.R.2537](#))

- National Ocean Exploration Program Act ([H.R.1834](#))
- National Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation Act ([H.R.2342](#))
- Federal Ocean Acidification Research And Monitoring Act ([H.R.4174](#))
- Shark Conservation Act of 2008 ([H.R.5741](#))
- Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries Boundary Modification and Protection Act ([H.R.1187](#))
- A bill amending the Tropical Forest Conservation Act to provide debt relief to developing countries that take action to protect tropical forests and coral reefs ([H.R.2185](#))

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